



Castle Donington College

Principal: Mrs Julie Sheppard

Vice Principal: Mr Nathan Barratt

06-02-23

Dear Castle Donington College Community,

It has been another busy few weeks at the College as we approach Day 100 of this academic year. Our building work continues at a pace, with a new modification every day. We have started to pick paint colours and floor coverings and are still on track, despite the cold weather, for completion on 31st March 2023. It is all very exciting, and we are looking forward to having more space around the site after Easter. All pupils have been incredibly patient and understanding throughout. They have lost over 50% of their outdoor space during the winter months and so are also looking forward to being able to spread out again!



Thank you to all pupils and parents for their support last Wednesday as most children experienced a day of Remote Learning. Year 11 pupils were in College all day working hard and enjoyed the shortened lunch queue and empty astro pitches! They worked through a 'walking talking' exam for English language in the morning. The idea behind this is that pupils perform the entire exam experience with their teacher who leads them through the paper question by question. They are shown how to identify what each question is asking and given advice on exam technique. With only 11 weeks to go before their final exams commence, pupils certainly valued the experience.



Pupils in Years 7,8 and 9 completed their Star Reader Tests last week. They completed an online assessment to measure reading growth. We have seen some incredible results from our pupils, with a significant number graduating from our Reading Intervention programme. Reading success is central to our curriculum and we devote 20 minutes a day to DEAR (Drop Everything And Read). We are so lucky to have a wonderful reading co-ordinator who has brought the library back to life and helped us to make reading a pleasure for so many!

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Our pupils are kind, helpful, hardworking and creative- they are incredibly talented! This is showcased by our KS3 Band Experience run by our very own guitar hero Brad. He has great expertise in empowering young people to work together to produce music. Pupils don't notice they are learning multiple life skills, co-operation, creative thinking, problem solving as well as building confidence and resilience. These sessions have been a fabulous introduction to music for so many pupils- we expect to see them show case their talents in the coming months.

Visiting classrooms, walking the corridors and whilst on my duty this week I have seen some wonderful things. An impassioned chess game over lunch, a group of friends welcoming a new pupil, a home-made apple charlotte (almost intact) created in a food lesson, the pupils' Flu vaccine process, our U14 girls off to play basketball, Maths Ambassadors working with younger pupils, Year Council debating.... The list goes on. We have had a number of visitors in the College and all have commented on our delightful students, the warm welcome they have received, productive classrooms and range of activities we offer.

It may be a bit of a squeeze at the moment but our passion to deliver great learning experiences continues. Thank you for your ongoing support as always.

Best wishes

Julie Sheppard
Principal